

A LINGUISTIC STUDY OF  
'EMPHASIS' IN ENGLISH AND MODERN STANDARD ARABIC

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Abstract

This paper presents linguistic phenomenon of emphasis in two different discourses: English and Modern Standard Arabic. Emphasis is used to indicate a more prominent or salient element of meaning. The paper presents an analysis of this phenomenon within the framework of "Speech Acts Theory". It includes various forms of emphasis in English and Modern Standard Arabic. It tries to investigate this phenomenon on various levels: the phonological, the semantic, the syntactic, and finally the pragmatic level. The results of the paper attempt to point out that emphasis in speech is a human tendency, and it is a part of human experience. The research includes the following components: abstract, introduction, aim of the study, scope of the study, sources of data, method of research, theoretical framework, English data, Arabic data, and the conclusion.

مستخلص البحث

تتناول الرسالة دراسة تقابلية لظاهرة التوكيد بين اللغة الإنجليزية والفصحى العربية المعاصرة. التوكيد هو ظاهرة لغوية يقصد بها إضفاء اهتمام أو تنبيه خاص موجه نحو سياق أو مقطع ما لإبراز أهمية هذا السياق. وقد تحدد مفهوم التوكيد لغويا كصفة نحوية يتم من خلالها تحديد أي جزء من الجملة سيقدم معلومات جديدة أو متباينة لدي المستمع أو القارئ. هناك جانب فلسفي لظاهرة التوكيد، لأن الإنسان يميل إلى هذا كلما تحدث؛ فهو يركز على أجزاء من الحديث بشكل أكبر من تركيزه على أجزاء أخرى. تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تعريف مفهوم التوكيد في إطار بعض النظريات اللغوية مثل نظرية "الأفعال الكلامية" التي نشأت وتطورت على يد الفلاسفة مثل "أوستن" 1962. وحللت الدراسة سياقات مختلفة متضمنة لظاهرة التوكيد في اللغتين الإنجليزية والفصحى العربية المعاصرة. وتفسر الرسالة هذه الظاهرة على مختلف المستويات: المستوى الصوتي، المستوى الدلالي، المستوى النحوي، وأخيرا المستوى التداولي (البرجماتي). كما تلقي الدراسة الضوء على بعض أوجه التشابه والاختلاف بين اللغتين. تنقسم الرسالة إلى ستة فصول: الفصل الأول يتناول التمهيد النظري للرسالة من خلال الهدف من الدراسة، أسئلة البحث، ومصادر البحث، ثم فرضيات البحث. كما يفسر طبيعة مفهوم (التوكيد) وأشكاله المختلفة والسمات المميزة لهذه الظاهرة اللغوية. الفصل الثاني وهو يتمثل في الأبحاث السابقة في مجال دراسة مفهوم (التوكيد) ومعانيه وتراكيبه المختلفة في اللغتين: الإنجليزية والفصحى العربية المعاصرة. يلقى الفصل الثالث الضوء على الإطار النظري للدراسة والذي سوف يستخدم لتحليل مفهوم التوكيد في إطار بعض النظريات اللغوية مثل نظرية "الأفعال الكلامية" ويحلل بعض السمات المميزة للتوكيد وفقا لذلك. ويستعرض الفصل الرابع تحليل لمفهوم التوكيد في اللغة الإنجليزية من خلال تقديم سياقات متنوعة مستخدمة لدى فئات متعددة من الأفراد. أما الفصل الخامس فهو تحليل لمفهوم التوكيد في الفصحى العربية المعاصرة. ويوضح هذا الفصل الوظائف المختلفة للتوكيد في اللغة العربية من قبل مختلف الفئات. ويعرض الفصل السادس الخاتمة والنتائج اللغوية لهذه الدراسة. الكلمات المحورية: التوكيد - نظرية "الأفعال الكلامية" - المستوى الصوتي - المستوى الدلالي - المستوى النحوي - المستوى التداولي (البرجماتي).

**Introduction:**

The tendency to emphasize some constituents is a common linguistic phenomenon. Emphasis is used to indicate a more prominent or salient element of meaning. It is a special expression that gives importance to elements, which are singled out. This phenomenon is a feature of communicative competence. Communicative competence is the linguistic ability, which is a system of the unconscious knowledge possessed by native speakers. It is the language capacity, and an innate ability to acquire language. The innateness hypothesis proposes that the ability to acquire language is a biological innate capacity. Furthermore, innate language learning ability is linked to physiological maturation. Chomsky states that children are born with the innate ability for acquiring human language. Children discover the grammar of their own language based on their own inborn grammar. Certain aspects of language structure are preordained by the cognitive structure of the human mind.

Emphasis in speech is a kind of human feature, as whenever he/she speaks he/she should have something to say, which is more important compared to other ideas. Emphasis is used in speech to make a focus on what is more prominent and more salient in the conversation. Speakers make their choices unconsciously and determine what choices are more appropriate to the particular context. The thesis is interested in determining what criteria are required to judge an utterance as emphatic or not, and what the degrees of emphases are.

There is a relationship between emphasis and meaning. Meaning can be explained by giving synonymous terms, or by finding one way to differentiate between those synonyms. Words do not exist in isolation. In order to reconstruct the meaning of sounds it is necessary to describe the utterances. According to Malinowski, "Speech is meaningless without the context of activity in which it is enveloped." It is important to interpret the meaning of each utterance within its actual context of situation. (Malinowski, 1923, p.9).

The speaker/ writer identifies which part of the utterance is more important than the other, according to different contexts of situations and different addressees. Differences of personal status, family and social relations, degrees of intimacy, degree of relation, ages, and other such factors, irrelevant to the consideration of sentences, as the expression of logical propositions, are all handled under the appropriate headings of a context of situation. Those linguistic investigations make a necessary reference to aspects of the context, where the term context is understood to cover the identities of participants, the temporal and spatial parameters

of the speech event, and the beliefs, knowledge, and intentions of the participants in that speech event (cited in Levinson, 1989, p.5).

The meaning of a specific utterance also differs according to different emphases, which is added to different linguistic units. There is a relationship between emphasis, meaning and form. Emphasis is added to the most important meaning that the speaker/writer intends to convey to his/her listener/reader in a specific form. The context of situation sometime adds something new to emphasize and sometimes not. Consider these two examples:

- I have Only read five pages.
- I have visited my sister Yesterday.

In the first example, the speaker intends to emphasize that he/she has read only five pages. The idea here is not the process of reading, but he/she focuses on the numbers of pages of reading. In the second example, the speaker emphasizes the day of the visit to his/her sister. The speaker does not emphasize the process of visiting his/her sister. The speaker is the only one who could determine which part of the sentence, he/she would like to emphasize and the technique of emphasis.

### **1. Aim of the Study:**

The paper aims at introducing the concept of emphasis in two different discourses: English and Modern Standard Arabic. It presents an analysis of this phenomenon within the framework of “Speech Acts Theory”. It includes various forms of emphasis in English and Modern Standard Arabic. The study tries to investigate this phenomenon on various levels: the syntactic, the semantic, the phonological, and finally the pragmatic level. The results of the paper attempt to point out that emphasis in speech is a human tendency, and it is a part of human experience. The paper expounds when and how the writer or speaker will add emphasis to his/her speech, and whether with intention or not. It points out if there are different degrees of emphasis in speech, according to different kinds of situation and various categories of speakers. The study will be the pioneered in a new branch of emphasis, which is called pragmatic emphasis.

### **2. Scope of Study:**

The paper focuses on the concept of emphasis. It deals with various forms of emphasis in two different discourses, i.e. English and Modern Standard Arabic. It attempts to answer the following questions: -

- What is meant by emphasis?
- What are the different forms of emphases used in English language and Modern Standard Arabic?
- What is the relation between emphasis and “Speech Act Theory”?

- How do we analyze the phenomenon of emphasis syntactically semantically, phonologically, and pragmatically in two different discourses (English and Modern Standard Arabic)?
- What are the similarities and differences between “emphasis” in English and Modern Standard Arabic?

### 3. Sources of Data:

This paper depends on data collected from the following sources:

- Recordings of actual daily conversations of native speakers of Modern Standard Arabic.
- English corpus; Recordings of conversations from the TOEFL tapes in “Cambridge Preparation for the TOEFL Test” by Jolene Gear & Robert Gear, second edition.
- Supplementary material from grammar books, articles and dissertations.
- Television and Radio programs and serials.

I found it natural to use examples from both classical Arabic and Colloquial Arabic, first since in actual communication situations users of Standard Arabic are liable to both varieties to help communicate an idea or message. Second, there is a close relation between Standard Arabic and Classical Arabic; Standard is an imitation of Classical, and Standard derives its background from Classical. In some religious and political programs, the guest uses code-switching unconsciously to clarify his idea. He moves from Standard Arabic to Colloquial Arabic to help communicate his idea.

Alsaeed Mohamed Badawy has classified Arabic language into five levels in his famous work ‘Levels of Modern Standard Arabic in Egypt’ (1973).

- 1-Classical Arabic
- 2-Modern Standard Arabic
- 3- Colloquial Variety of the Cultured
- 4- Colloquial Variety of the Enlightened
- 5- Colloquial Variety of the Illiterate

### 4. Method of Research:

The following procedures are followed:

- **Collecting data:**

Data are collected from the various sources, which are mentioned above.

- **Definition of terms:**

The paper provides definitions of some linguistic terms used in the thesis.

- **Analyzing and discussing data:**

Data are analyzed according to the aim of the research, which is to tackle the concept of emphasis in two different discourses, and how this concept could be linked with the linguistic theory “Speech Act Theory”

**Theoretical Framework:**

Language is universal. People have the same common ground and the same structure. God give us the innate ability, which is the starting point in acquiring the native language. This innate ability is the unconscious knowledge of language. People are born with this ability to use language and to communicate.

When people communicate, it is natural to assume that what is said is not always of the same degree of importance. They have certain new information, which they intend to emphasize. The new information is more important than the old one, which is called shared knowledge among the participants. The phenomenon of emphasis is a language universal property, as it exists in all languages with their different cultures and histories. This study investigates the way in which speakers determine which aspects of an utterance to emphasize and how this affects the form of utterances. When speakers decide what to say, they have to make many choices, as well as deciding what to talk about and which words to use in a sentence. They have to decide which aspects of the sentence should be emphasized. To explore the phenomenon of emphasis, the theoretical framework will be divided into five categories. These five branches are:

- 1- **Lexical Emphasis.**
- 2- **Syntactic Emphasis.**
- 3- **Semantic Emphasis.**
- 4- **Phonological Emphasis.**
- 5- **Pragmatic Emphasis.**

**1- Lexical Emphasis**

Lexical emphasis is what depends on the semantic criteria. Some lexes are added to sentences to emphasize part of a certain idea or even the whole idea.

1-1 Lexical emphasis may emphasize the whole sentence

Lexical emphasis includes all the semantic criteria which depend on the use of lexis, whether the utterance is used to emphasize the whole

sentence or part of it; all the sentence modifiers (Actually – In fact – Indeed...) are used in sentence to emphasize the whole sentence.

Ex: Actually I helped the old woman yesterday.

The speaker uses the sentence modifier (actually) to emphasize the idea that He/she is the one who helped the old woman.

1-2 Lexical emphasis may emphasize part of the sentence by reflexive pronoun.

(a) He himself did the work.

(b) He did the work himself.

The last two examples have lexical emphasis, as the sentences emphasize the person who did the work, not the work itself. The two examples are used and the two are correct, but the first one is more emphatic than the second, especially when the emphatic pronoun (himself) is used just behind the main pronoun (he).

Ex: (c) I talked to the man himself.

The speaker used the utterance (himself) to emphasize part of the sentence which is (the man).

1-3 Lexical emphasis is used by the reversal of meaning:

Ex: The bad boys

It is a name of a music band. The name of the band has contradictory meaning with what the speaker intends to mean. The speaker uses the word bad to emphasize the contrasted idea of meaning. He/she intends to emphasize how perfect a band they are by using the antonym of the word good.

The same idea is in Cairene Colloquial Arabic, for example

(a) /ka;fir/ كافر

(b) /ga;hid/ جاهد

(c) /fa:zi;ʕa/ فظيعة

A lot of colloquial Arabic words are used with the reversal of its literal meaning.

## 2- Syntactic Emphasis

One of the most effective ways to make language more emphatic when using English is by inverting a sentence's regular word order which is called inversion. Word order shows how much more effective the sentence can be, if one puts words in the right place at the right time to guide the readers to the intended meaning of the speech. Examples of word order for emphasis are as follows:

1) *He had never seen such an interesting live show*

The sentence above displays a regular, relatively common word order in English. We have a subject (*he*), followed by a negative verb form in the past perfect (*had never seen*) and a modified object (*such interesting live show*). Now let's look closely at the second example:

2) *Never had he seen such an interesting live show*

The second sentence clearly demonstrates a shift in the first example's word order. *Never* is what is known as a 'Negative Adverbial'. The word *Never* has been taken away from the sentence's main verb phrase and inserted at the beginning. Then, the past auxiliary *had* is placed in front of the subject, *he*. The basic formula for transforming common sentences into more emphatic statements is as follows:

Negative Adverbial or 'Only'/'No' Expression + Auxiliary or Modal Verb + Subject + Main Verb + Object

3) *Never had we heard such a bad news*

Despite using the past perfect in sentences 2) and 3), this formula remains reliable with the future tense also, for example:

4) *Rarely will I eat chocolate during the week*

5) *Under no circumstances should you leave your children unsupervised*

Other Negative Adverbials include: *rarely, not since, hardly, never before, not until, little, at no time* etc.

'No'/'Only' Expressions include: *under no circumstances, not only, no sooner, in no way, only when*. (Quirk, Leech and Svartvik, 1985)

Linguistic research suggests that word order displacement is a syntactic means. Many languages have to put on certain information in special focus within a sentence and its context. The term for this special highlighting is 'marked focus.' Pleonastic pronouns with finite verbs also function in many of the same ways as word order displacement, suggesting that this pleonasm is a special focusing device. The purpose of marked focus is to create these discourse functions.

Another example of word order is as follows:

Shakespeare had chosen the exact word order in his great work "Macbeth":

(1) "The queen, my lord, is dead".

The sentence above could be said in a different arrangement such as:

(2) "The queen is dead, my lord"

(3) Or "My lord, the queen is dead"

In sentence (1) Shakespeare had put his subject in the first place to attract his addressee (his lord), and then he had completed the sentence.

Another example of emphasis by inversion is as follows:

a- Yesterday Kamal travelled.

b- Kamal travelled yesterday.

c- It was yesterday when Kamal had travelled.

Sentence (a) is more emphasized than sentence (b), and in (c), the place of the word (yesterday) is more appropriate to be added at the

beginning of the sentence to attract the reader's attention to the time of travelling.

### 3- Semantic Emphasis

#### 3-1 Semantic emphasis by metaphor

Metaphor is a figure of speech in which an implied comparison is made between two unlike things that actually have something in common. A metaphor expresses the unfamiliar (the tenor) in terms of the familiar (the vehicle). It will suffice to say that similes differ from metaphors by containing words such as *like* or *as* to make a comparison explicit, for example *He eats like a horse* (Griffiths, 2006, p.86).

Metaphors are comparisons that show how two things that are not alike in most ways are similar in one important way. A metaphor is more forceful (active) than an analogy, because metaphor asserts that two things are the same, whereas analogy implies a difference.

Some theorists have suggested that metaphors are not merely stylistic, but that they are cognitively important as well. A common definition of a metaphor can be described as a comparison that shows how two things that are not alike in most ways are similar in another important way. They explain how a metaphor is being understood and experienced as one kind of thing in terms of another. The authors call this concept a 'conduit metaphor.' By this they meant that a speaker can put ideas or objects into words or containers, and then send them along a channel, or conduit, to a listener who takes that idea or object out of the container and makes meaning of it. In other words, communication is something that ideas go into. The container is separate from the ideas themselves. Lakoff and Johnson give several examples of daily metaphors we use, such as "argument is war" and "time is money." Metaphors are widely used in context to describe personal meaning. The authors also suggest that communication can be viewed as a machine: "Communication is not what one does with the machine, but is the machine itself." (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980, pp.3-13)

Metaphors facilitate explanation in the popularization of science. For example, *She's a Mary Robinson*. Out of context, *She's a Mary Robinson* could be intended either literally 'She is a person who has the name Mary Robinson' or metaphorically 'She is a person who is similar in some contextually relevant ways to Professor Mary Robinson who was president of Ireland' (Griffiths, 2006, p.88).

Figurative interpretation is explicature in which one or more literal meanings are replaced, for example by an antonym in some types of irony. Stern's theory of metaphor was informally recounted, according to which vehicle expressions-ones that carry figurative meanings- are used rather in the manner of a deictic demonstrative (like the word that) to



“point” out presuppositions for use in interpretation. Figurative interpretation is somewhat open-ended because different people come with different presuppositions and differ over what they regard as relevant in a given context (Griffiths, 2006, p.90).

#### 4- Phonological Emphasis

Marked and unmarked emphasis

First, emphasis is used phonologically by what is called **stress**, which is the relative emphasis that may be given to certain syllables in a word, or to certain words in a phrase or sentence. Stress means to make sounds in a syllable more noticeable than others by volume, duration, and key. The term is also used for similar patterns of phonetic prominence inside syllables. A syllable is a unit of organization for a sequence of speech sounds. For example, the word *water* is composed of two syllables: *wa* and *ter*. A syllable is typically made up of a syllable nucleus (most often a vowel) with optional initial and final margins (typically, consonants). Emphasis is used phonologically by making the nucleus syllable the emphatic one and pronouncing it with a rising intonation. For example, in “He **MUST** go to the clinic tomorrow”, the emphatic syllable is “must” which is pronounced with a rising intonation to emphasize it. Stresses are classified into two types; Inferrables and observables. Inferrables are those which the speaker deduces from the structure, and they are indefinite, while the observables are those which the speaker can observe, and they are definite (Werth, 1984 p.98).

Focus may be highlighted either prosodically or syntactically or both, depending on the language. In syntax, this can be done assigning focus markers, as shown in (1), or by preposing, as shown in (2):

(1) I saw JOHN.

(2) JOHN, I saw.

In (1), focus is marked syntactically and phonologically by a nuclear pitch accent. Clefting induces an obligatory intonation break. Therefore, in (2), focus is marked via word order and a nuclear pitch accent.

Focus directly affects the semantics, or meaning, of a sentence. Different ways of pronouncing the sentence affect the meaning, or what the speaker intends to convey. It distinguishes one interpretation of a sentence from other interpretations of the same sentence that do not differ in word order, but may differ in the way in which the words are taken to relate to each other.

Focus could be achieved by either accent or contrast. Accent marks new or revived information, as prominent.

In most languages, speakers use sentence prosody (prosody is an important marker of the achievement of reading fluency) by varying

pitch, duration and loudness. Thus, speakers can indicate which elements they want to emphasize. Prosody seems to have been designed to enhance communication and comprehension. Language (and, we might assume, particularly written language) is often fairly ambiguous, and prosody assists in disambiguation. Prosody can be interpreted as a way to increase the salience and importance of some words, phrases, or ideas over others. The prosody of a spoken element reflects its relative standing in the developing discourse structure. However, the prosody of a text needs to be constructed while reading aloud (in contrast to listening comprehension) because much of what needs to be marked about prosody is not directly indicated in the text through punctuation, which may not be a reliable guide. The reading expression aspect of fluency is determined by the prosodic features of oral reading—the rise and fall of pitch, the rhythm and intensity placed on certain words and phrases, and the pausing between words that sometimes occurs while reading aloud. Prosody is comprised of acoustic features such as pitch (or fundamental frequency, F0), duration (length), pausing (or, colloquially, pausal intrusion), and loudness (or intensity/amplitude).

(Schwanenflugel, Westmoreland, and Benjamin, 2015, p. 11).

Second, the phenomenon of emphasis is used phonologically also by what is called intonation. It is a variation of spoken [pitch](#) that is not used to distinguish words; instead it is used for a range of functions such as indicating the attitudes and emotions of the speaker, signaling the difference between statements and questions, and between different types of question, focusing attention on important elements of the spoken message and also helping to regulate conversational interaction. It is the melody in which the musical pitch of the voice changes during an utterance. It contrasts with [tone](#), in which pitch variation in some languages *does* distinguish words, either lexically or grammatically. The intonation of spoken English generally gives extra weight to one syllable in a stretch that often coincides with a clause. (Griffiths, 2006, p.167)

Rules of phonological interpretation assign an intonational contour to surface structures. Certain phrases of the surface structure may be marked, by grammatical processes of a poorly understood sort, as receiving expressive or contrastive stress, and these markings also affect the operation of the rules of phonological interpretation. If no such processes have applied, the rules assign the normal intonation. In any event, phrases that contain the intonation center may be interpreted as focus of utterance, the conditions perhaps being somewhat different and more restrictive when the intonation center involves expressive or contrastive stress. Choice of focus determines the relation of the utterance

to responses, to utterances to which it is a possible response, and to other sentences in the discourse (Werth,1984, pp. 122,123).

The syllables that are not stressed are weak or small or quiet. Fluent speakers of English listen for the STRESSED syllables, not the weak syllables. If you use word stress in your speech, you will instantly and automatically improve your pronunciation and your comprehension.

### 5- Pragmatic Emphasis

This kind of emphasis may be called ‘pragmatic emphasis’ which depends on a combination of meaning, structure, and the context of situation, not sentences. Pragmatic emphasis is understood within the contexts of situations of a given language. Each utterance, which is interpreted within the context in the language, and is emphasized with any of the linguistic methods of emphasis, is called pragmatic emphasis. It is a new branch of emphasis, which is a study of emphatic meaning that is very much based on the situation. It is the study of the emphatic intended meaning. It is the study of language in use, or language in situation. There are certain required criteria to judge a situation as pragmatic emphatic situation. These are classified as follows: -

- 1- The relation between the lexis and the situation.
- 2- The relation between the utterance and the situation.
- 3- The relation between the whole sentence and the situation.
- 4- The relation between the language of the context and the situation.

So, it is noticed that the situation is the common factor among the four criteria. That explains the importance of situation with all its elements in dealing with the pragmatic emphasis.

There are three stages for realizing the phenomenon of pragmatic emphasis:

- a- Interpreting the relation between linguistic theories
- b- Determining the motivation for achieving pragmatic emphasis
- c- Tools of realizing pragmatic emphasis

for example:

- a- I have found this book here not on the desk.

The lexical item (here) is a locational deictic, and is interpreted pragmatically according to the context of situation. The lexical item adds pragmatic emphasis to the sentence, and the complement of the sentence (not on the desk) emphasizes the emphasis.

Another situation:

Two friends are talking about the lost pen that Speaker B has lost a few days ago, and speaker A has found.

A: I have found *this* pen in my bag.

B: Which one.

A: This one.

In the above situation the first deictic is unmarked. It is not considered as pragmatic emphasis. But the second one, which is underlined, is marked, and it is considered as pragmatic emphasis. Speaker A has intended to emphasize that pen with the deictic “this”, to



attract Speaker B’s attention that he has found his pen.

### **English Data:**

The paper tries to expound the phenomenon of emphasis and how such emphases are represented in the speech of media discourse in general, and in TV series and Radio series in particular. The paper classifies the phenomenon of emphasis in English into some categories, which clarify the various types of emphasis in English especially the last category (Pragmatic Emphasis), which the researcher investigates as a new and pioneered category of emphasis. The following categories are classified according to different contexts of situations, and according to the degree of closeness among people using emphasis. The situations are adopted from recordings of conversations from the TOEFL tapes in “Cambridge Preparation for the TOEFL Test” by Jolene Gear & Robert Gear (2002).

- 1- **Phonological Emphasis**
- 2- **Semantic Emphasis**
- 3- **Syntactic Emphasis**
- 4- **Pragmatic Emphasis**

Throughout the analysis of the situations the researcher realizes that there are Degrees of Emphasis. At the end of each situation, degrees

of emphasis that have been used within the situations will be analyzed as ordinary, less emphatic, emphatic, more emphatic, and highly emphatic. The following diagram explains the degrees of emphasis:

**Degrees of Emphasis**

**Scale (1)**

The following situation clarifies the above Diagram:

A: Did you finish the homework?

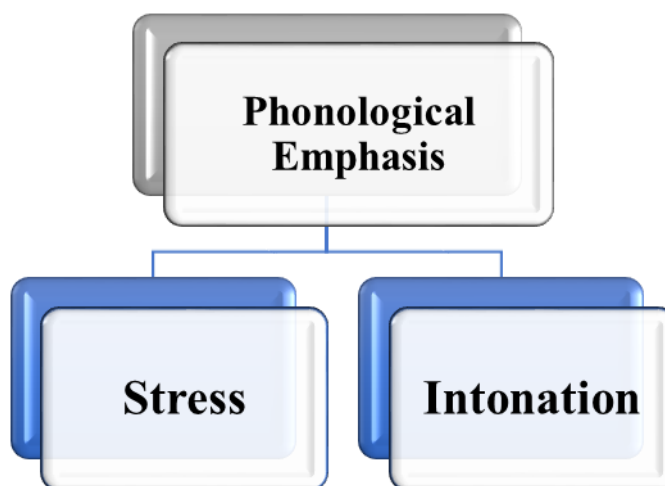
B1: Yes.

B2: Yes, I did.

B3: Yes, I finished it.

B4: Yes, I did finish it.

Speaker A's question may have four answers. B1 has just one word (Yes). *It is the most common, and the less emphatic.* B2 has three words and it is more emphatic than B3. B3 has four words and it is more emphatic than B2. B4 has five words, and it is highly emphatic. So the more educated a person is, the more polite and relevant his utterances are.



This is called appropriateness. At the same idea, the more educated a person is, the more emphatic his utterances are.

**1- Phonological Emphasis**

**diagram (1)**

1-1 Phonological Emphasis used between two relatives:

Two persons are relatives. Speaker A is a woman of 28 years old. She is a housewife. Speaker B is a woman of 34 years old. She is a doctor, and she is her cousin. Speaker A asks Speaker B about the time of her brother's travel.

A: When did your brother travel?

B: Ahmed travelled Yesterday.

Both speaker A and speaker B have shared knowledge, which is the idea of her brother's Arrival. But speaker A does not know exactly when he travelled. The idea of travel is called old information among the

speakers, while the time of travel is called new information. Speaker B adds her emphasis on Yesterday by putting stress on the first Syllable. This situation is explicit and emphatic. The speakers add only one degree of emphasis, which changes the situation from an ordinary situation to an emphatic one.

Speaker B could add another degree of emphasis on her sentence by starting her sentence by Yesterday which is called Syntactic Emphasis. This will be explained later. The situation changes to more emphatic, as the speakers add another degree of emphasis.

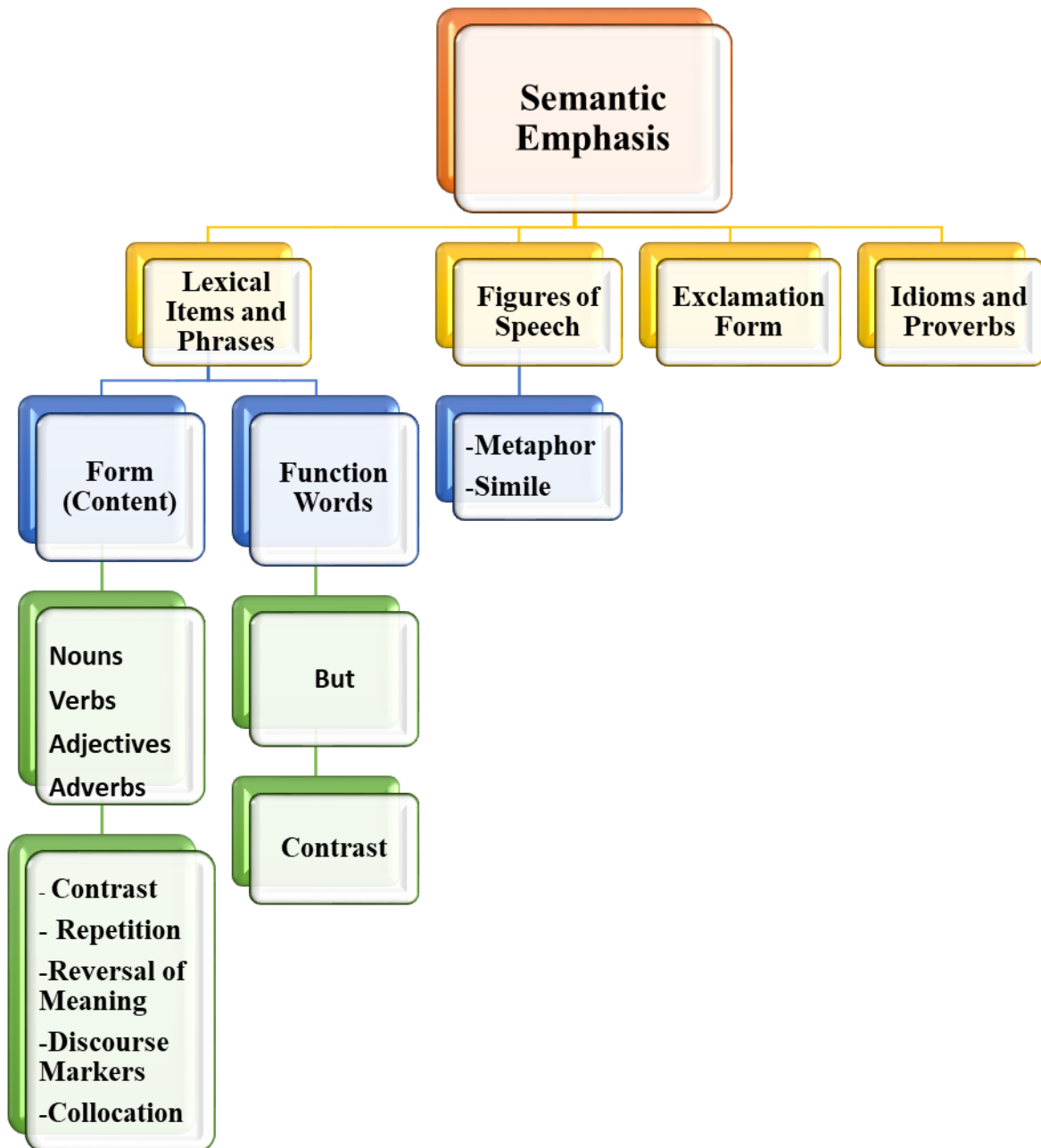
B: Yesterday Ahmed travelled.

The analysis clarifies the relation between the phenomena of “Emphasis” and “Speech Act Theory” (Austin 1975). This theory depends on the analysis of three acts: “locutionary act”, “illocutionary act”, and “perlocutionary act”, which will be demonstrated in the following situations:

Speaker A starts the conversation with the utterance “When did your brother travel?” (locutionary act). Speaker A’s utterance is a direct question which asks about the time of her brother’s arrival (illocutionary act). Speaker B understands the intention of speaker A, and answers the question by adding the primary stress on the word (Yesterday), which is a phonological emphasis (perlocutionary act).

2-Semantic Emphasis

Diagram (2)



2-1-1 Lexical Emphasis by contrast used between two friends:

Speaker A is a student of 8 years old. She is a girl. Speaker B is her friend in the same class. He is a boy.

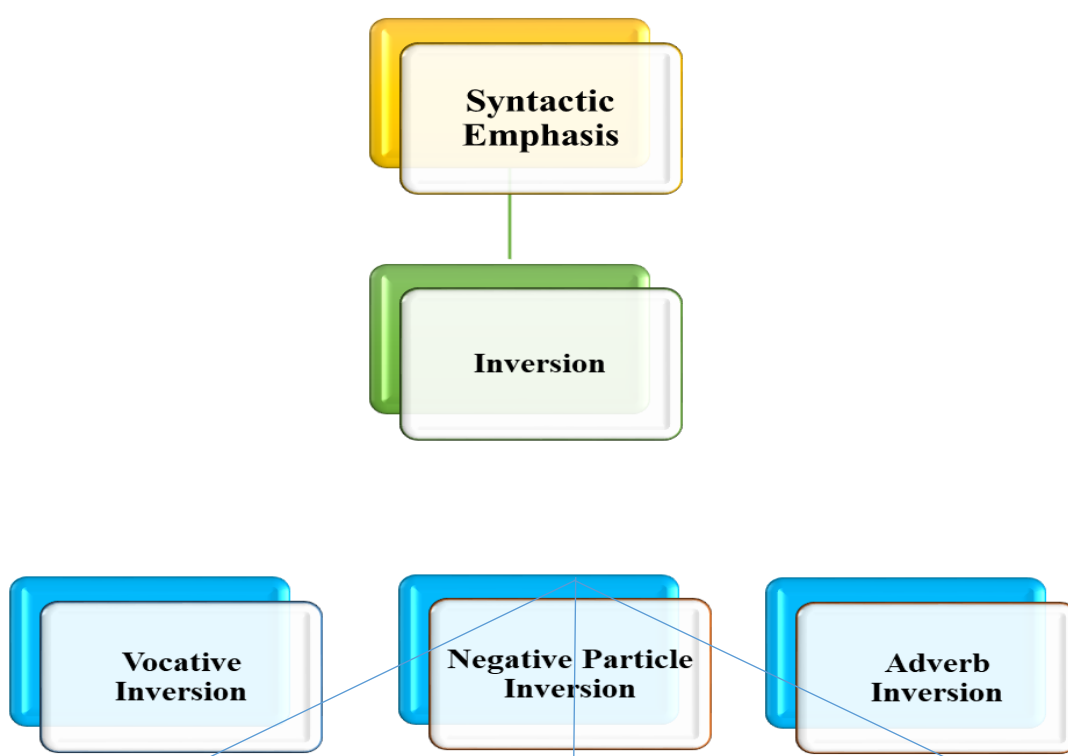
A: The teacher is slim. He is not fat at all.

B: You are Right.

Speaker A uses the contrasting items (slim and fat) to emphasize her opinion about her teacher. Speaker B emphasizes her opinion by using another phonological emphasis. The situation is explicit and emphatic.

Speaker A starts the conversation with the contrasted items “The teacher is slim. He is not fat at all” (locutionary act). Speaker A’s utterance is a statement (illocutionary act). Speaker B gets the intention of speaker A, and gives his utterance “You are Right” (perlocutionary act).

### 3-Syntactic Emphasis



**Diagram (3)**

3-1-1 Syntactic Emphasis by word order used among characters in a play:

An example of word order is as follows:

Shakespeare had chosen exactly word order in his great work “Macbeth”:

(1) “The queen, my lord, is dead”.



The sentence above could be said in a different arrangement such as:

(2) “The queen is dead, my lord”

(3) Or “My lord, the queen is dead”

In sentence (1) Shakespeare put his subject in the first place to attract his addressee (his lord), and then he completed the sentence.

Not only does the word order affect the meaning and emphasis of the sentence, but it is also the use of punctuation in the sentence. There are some important points in the speech where the best words can get the special attention they deserve. The situation is explicit and emphatic, as the speaker adds a syntactic emphasis by word order.

#### 4-Pragmatic Emphasis

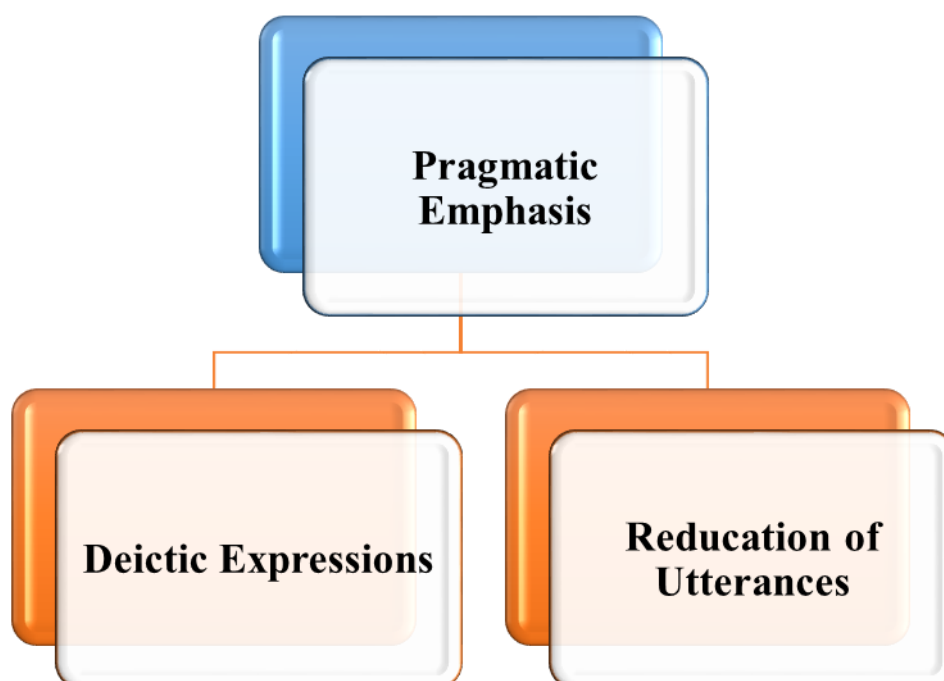


Diagram (4)

4-1-1 Pragmatic Emphasis by a deictic expression used between two students in the same class:

Speaker A is a girl of about 10 years old. Speaker B is her friend in the same class. Speaker A has lost her pen in the class. She does not find it anywhere. She asks her friend if she has found it.

A: Did you find my pen?

B: Yes, I have found it here in the class, not in my bag.

Speaker B adds two different kinds of emphasis to her answer. Both of them are considered pragmatic emphasis. First, she uses the word (here); the lexical item which is interpreted pragmatically. Second, she adds a complementary phrase to her reply to emphasize the first

emphasis, which is (in the class), not in my bag, or at home. The situation is implied and emphatic.

Speaker A uses the utterance: "Did you find my pen?" (locutionary act). The utterance is an indirect question which asks about the pen (illocutionary act). Speaker A believes that Speaker B has taken her pen. Speaker B understands the intended meaning of the question, and answers, when she adds a pragmatic emphasis, by using the deictic expression (here): "Yes, I have found it here in the class, not in my bag" (perlocutionary act). Speaker B wants to emphasize the idea that she did not take the pen.

### **Arabic Data:**

The paper is concerned with the analysis of The phenomenon of emphasis in Modern Standard Arabic. Language is not divided into levels or sections. Even if it has been classified into certain levels, those levels are integrated and communicated with each other. The highly educated person could even use more than one level of these different levels in the same conversation, and could move among them as he/she can, especially the second, the third, and the fourth level. That is why this chapter includes more than one level of different situations of Arabic language. There are some emphatic examples, which include Classic Arabic, such as the Qurʾan. There are some emphatic situations which include Colloquial Arabic. Education, age, region, and social level affect the level of Arabic language, which is used among the people of a certain region. For example, it is noticed that the Arabic language of Upper Egypt is more standard than Cairene Arabic. In fact, the Standard language integrates into the five levels of Arabic language.

### **1-Phonological Emphasis in Arabic Data**

#### **1-1-1 Phonological Emphasis by intonation used between the teacher and his student:**

Speaker A is a teacher of about 29 years old. Speaker B is his student. He is about 12 years old. They are in the class room. They are talking about the reason of coming late.

B: ʔassala:mu ʕalaykum.

(Peace be upon you).

A: wa ʕalaykum -ssala:m wa rāhmātu -llā:h wa bārāka:tu.

(Peace be upon you too).

A: Ma sabab taʔxi:rak belʔams ya walad (with rising intonation)

(Why did you come late yesterday, boy?).

B: ʔana ʔa:sef ya ʔosta:z. (with falling intonation)

ʔestayqazt motaʔaxeran.

(I am sorry, teacher).

(I got up late).

Speaker A adds a phonological emphasis to his speech by adding the rising intonation on the sentence /ma sabab taʔxi:rak belʔams ya walad?/. He means to raise his voice to emphasize the idea of coming late to school. He intends to raise his voice to emphasize, that he will not allow him to enter the class if he will come late. The situation is an emphatic situation. The speaker uses only one degree of emphasis, which is the phonological emphasis.

Speaker A starts the question with the rising intonation to emphasize the idea that he is upset of his coming late yesterday: /ma sabab taʔxi:rak belʔams ya walad/, (locutionary act). Speaker A does not intend to ask speaker B about the reason of his delay, but he intends to emphasize the idea that the pupil should apologize (illocutionary act). The effect of the speech on speaker B is the perlocutionary act, which is the apology: /ʔana ʔa:saf ya ʔosta:z/.

## **2-Semantic Emphasis in Arabic Data**

### **2-1-1 Lexical Emphasis by swearing used between two colleagues in the same job:**

Speaker A is a woman of about 50 years old. She is an employee. Speaker B is her friend. She is about 53 years old. They are colleagues at the same company. Speaker B has visited speaker A at her home for the first time. Speaker A has welcomed her very much.

A: nawwārti:na ʔinnahārdā wāllā:hi

(You're most welcome today, I swear by God).

B: rābbena yixalli:ki da no:rek.

(May God grant you a long life)

Speaker A adds emphasis by using swearing by God (wāllā:hi), to emphasize the idea that her friend is most welcome today. She is very happy to see her friend.

The (locutionary act) is the utterance of speaker A: /nawwārti:na ʔinnahārdā wāllā:hi/. Speaker A does not intend to swear by God, but she intends to use the greeting to welcome her friend, by using the lexical emphasis by swearing (illocutionary act). Speaker B felt happy with the nice greeting, and she says /rābbena yixalli:ki da no:rek/ (perlocutionary act).

## **3-Syntactic Emphasis in Arabic Data**

### **3-1-1 Syntactic Emphasis by word order used between an announcer and her guest:**

Speaker A is an announcer of about 37 years old. Her name is Lamia Abd Alhameed. The program is /Bokra ʔħla:/ (Tomorrow is better) on Al Nahar Channel. Speaker B is a religious man of about 55 years old.

His name is Mohamed Abu Bakr. They are talking about how the man should help his wife at home.

A: ʔassala:mu ʕalaykum.

(Peace be upon you).

B: wa ʕalaykum -ssala:m wa rāhmātu -llā:h wa bārāka:tu.

(Peace be upon you too).

A: ma howa raʔy ʔaldi:n fi mosa:ʕadat ʔalragol leʔahl bayteh faḍi:lat ʔalʕaix ʔawadd ʔalyo:m ʔan ʔataḥaddas ʕan ha:za ʔalmawdu:ʕ.

(What is the opinion of religion in the man's helping to his wife? I would like to speak about this issue).

Speaker A adds a syntactic emphasis to her speech by changing the ordinary order of the sentence. She begins the sentence with the question /ma howa raʔy ʔaldi:n fi mosa:ʕadat ʔalragol leʔahl bayteh /, although the announcer should start with this sentence /faḍi:lat ʔalʕaix ʔawadd ʔalyo:m ʔan ʔataḥaddas ʕan ha:za ʔalmawdu:ʕ/. The announcer intends to emphasize the importance of her idea, so she starts with the question to attract the attention of the listeners. The situation is emphatic.

After the greetings among the speaker, speaker A starts the conversation with the utterance /ma howa raʔy ʔaldi:n fi mosa:ʕadat ʔalragol leʔahl bayteh faḍi:lat ʔalʕaix ʔawadd ʔalyo:m ʔan ʔataḥaddas ʕan ha:za ʔalmawdu:ʕ/ (locutionary act). She intends to ask a direct question about this issue by adding a syntactic emphasis by word order (illocutionary act). She intends to change the ordinary order of the sentence to begin with the new information of the sentence. The effect of her syntactic emphasis is to attract the listeners' attention (perlocutionary act).

#### 4-Pragmatic Emphasis in Arabic Data

##### 4-1-1 Pragmatic Emphasis by reduction used between a teacher and his student:

Speaker A is a teacher of about 33 years old. Speaker B is his student of about 9 years old. Speaker A wants to ask speaker B if he has finished writing the lesson.

A: hal ʔentahait min keta:bet ʔaldars?

(Did you finish writing the lesson?).

B1: naʕam.

(Yes).

Speaker B adds a pragmatic emphasis to his answer by reducing the answer to only one word, which is /naʕm/ (Yes). He intends to emphasize the idea that he has really finished the writing. He intends to say (Yes, I finished writing the lesson).

Speaker B intends to convey some implicatures according to the context of situation, for example:

B2: naʕam ʔana faʕalt.

(Yes, i did).

B3: naʕm ʔentahait min keta:bet ʔaldars.

(Yes, i finished witing the lesson).

B4: naʕm ʔentahait belfeʕl min keta:bet ʔaldars.

(Yes, i did finish witing the lesson).

B4 is the most emphatic answer, while B1 is the most common, more pragmatic, and less emphatic. B2 has three words, and it is more emphatic than B1. B3 has four words, and it is more emphatic than B2. B4 has five words, and it is highly emphatic. So the more educated a person is, the more polite and relevant his utterances are.

Speaker A starts with the utterance /hal ʔentahait min keta:bet ʔaldars/ (locutionary act). He intends to ask a direct question to his student (illocutionary act). Speaker B feels that his teacher is not sure, if his student has finished or not. Speaker B replies with /naʕam/ to add a pragmatic emphasis by reduction. He intends to emphasize the idea that he has finished the writing.

#### **Findings and Conclusion:**

The paper tackles the linguistic phenomenon of Emphasis in two different discourses; English and Modern Standard Arabic. This phenomenon is a feature of communicative competence. It is used to indicate a more prominent or salient element of meaning. Emphasis in speech is a kind of human feature, as whenever he/she speaks he/she should have something to say, which is more important compared to other ideas.

The paper presents different contexts of situations using emphasis in both varieties. It emphasizes that the phenomenon of emphasis differs from the concept of focus; emphasis is more comprehensive, while focus is a function of the linguistic phenomenon. The context of situations declare that emphasis may be used with intention or not during the natural conversation. Emphasis can be used between different categories: friends, strangers, relatives, doctors and their patients, and announcers and their guests. The paper will be the pioneered in a new branch of emphasis, which is called pragmatic emphasis.

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